



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
PROBATION COMMISSION**  
9150 EAST IMPERIAL HIGHWAY – DOWNEY – CALIFORNIA 90242  
**(562) 940-2754**



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF APRIL 14, 2016**

The regular meeting of the County of Los Angeles Probation Commission was held on Thursday, April 14, 2016, Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, room 743, Los Angeles, California 90012

I. President Gardner called the meeting to order at 10: 15 a.m.

He informed the Commissioners and all present that the meeting was being recorded for purposes of increasing accuracy of the minutes. He asked that all identify themselves prior to any statements,

The following Commissioners were present:

President Joe Gardner  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Levine  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Hollopeter  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Seaver  
Commissioner Kaplan  
Commissioner Shutan  
Commissioner Meredith  
Commissioner Mitchell  
Commissioner Caster  
Commissioner Jones  
Commissioner Butler

The following Commissioners were not present:

Commissioner Holt  
Commissioner Martinez  
Commissioner Hoover  
Commissioner Yamashiro

The following staff and guests were present:

Luis Dominguez, Bureau Chief, RTSB  
Patricia Rodriguez, Secretary, Probation Department  
Monica Garcia, Special Projects  
Michelle Newell, Justice Deputy, District 2  
Natasha Kamashian, Public Defender's Office  
Cookie Lommel, Local 685 Representative  
Cynthia Hernandez, OIM, Probation Department

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**Commissioners**

Joe Gardner-President,

Jan Levine-1st Vice President, Clayton Hollopeter-2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Daniel Seaver-3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President,  
Donald Meredith-Sergeant at Arms, Azael Martinez-Sonoqui, Cyn Yamashiro, Esq.,  
Fitzgerald Jones, Gabriella Holt, R.N. E.J.D. Jacqueline Caster, Esq, Jo Kaplan Esq,  
Olivia E. Mitchell, Peter Shutan, Zachary Hoover, Betsy Butler

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## **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of January 28, 2016 were approved. Commissioner Levine moved approval, seconded by Commissioner Shutan.

The minutes of February 25, 2016 were approved. Commissioner Shutan moved approval, seconded by Commissioner Meredith. Commissioner Mitchell abstained.

## **III. LOS ANGELES COUNTY PROBATION DEPARMENT UPDATE**

Bureau Chief (BC) Dominguez advised the Commission that Camp Scott and Camp Scudder were relocated temporarily overnight to Barry J. Nidorf due to a small fire resulting from a shortage in the electrical boxes. This caused the short of the generator. The actual repairs took 3-4 days. The youth returned without further incident.

Commissioner Kaplan inquired as where the girls were housed, if a SHU unit or general population. BC Dominguez informed that the girls stayed together in a dormitory unit that was available at BJ Nidorf.

Reorganization of the Department has commenced. There is an Executive Bulletin (No. 1716, dated 4/8/16) from the Chief Remington advising of the changes in responsibility. Phase I of this reorganization includes Internal Affairs and Professional Standards. The other changes are awaiting final timeline from leadership.

## **IV. DISCUSS LETTER TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, WORKING GROUP**

President Gardner asked Commissioners to review the draft Letter to Board of Supervisors regarding the Proposal to Improve Oversight of the Probation Department.

Commissioner Seaver expressed support for the document and moved an additional bullet indicating that the Commission would provide an annual vote of confidence on the performance of the Chief Probation Officer. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Kaplan.

A robust discussion surfaced issues of relationship, roles and responsibility between the Chief and the Commission. The desire surfaced for a positive, collaborative relationship with consistent, responsiveness and meaningful communication. Issues were raised about rights of an employee, the meaning of a "vote of confidence", public critiques of the Chief and communication back to Board of Supervisors.

It was noted that the Commission & the Department are aligned in desire for a high quality Department and quality services. Discussion also surfaced regarding appropriateness of a "vote of confidence," whether it should be communicated in Closed Session and whether it belongs in this document. Desire for advisory role of Commission to be active and engaged. Motion approved: 7 yes votes (Jones, Seaver, Hollopeter, Caster, Kaplan, Butler, Levine) 3 No votes (Mitchell, Gardner, Shutan) and one abstention (Meredith).

### **DISCUSS LETTER TO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, WORKING GROUP (cont.)**

Commissioner Kaplan suggested to add the word 'independent' under the Recommendations, third bullet.

Commissioner Shutan requests language that relates to the opinion of the Legislative Counsel of the State of California dated August 16, 2006 be included. He read the last paragraph of the opinion provided for Hon. Karen Bass and included a footnote:

Section 243 states that the probation commission shall function in an advisory capacity to the probation officer; however, unlike section 229 and 229.5 which sets for the duties and powers of juvenile justice commissions, the provision relating to the probation commission do not specifically prescribe the duties of the probation commission. Because Section 225 requires a juvenile justice commission in each county and because section 240 provides that the probation commission is appointed in lieu of a juvenile justice commission, in the absence of any statute specifically setting forth the duties and powers of the probation commission, we think that a court would conclude that the probation commission has all the duties and powers of the juvenile justice commission.

Therefore, we conclude that the probation commission in Los Angeles County is required to inspect publicly administered juvenile facilities located in the county.

And in the footnote 4, "This is consistent with the information contained in the legislative history of Section 240. For example, in regard to proposed legislation changing the name of the Los Angeles "probation committee" to the "probation commission," a committee report stated that the Legislature had merely permitted Los Angeles County to "retain the name of their preexisting committee with the same duties" as those of the juvenile justice commission (SEN. Com. on Judiciary. Rep. on A.B. 1287 (1987-1988 reg. Sess.) as amended May 28, 1987 p.2)

Commissioner Shutan concludes that State intends for the probation commission serve as the juvenile justice commission expect in name. He surfaces the conflict between the State interpretation and that of County Counsel.

Commission Levine requests that the "commensurate with the juvenile justice commission' be added to the end of the last sentence of the opinion.

Commissioner Kaplan: To receive all audits, reports and studies from the Department Of Justice, academic institutions, and all other governmental or non-governmental agencies regarding Juvenile related issues in the Probation Department. And further to receive the Department's response promptly to these reports.

It is stated that every county has a juvenile justice commission, except LA County. LA County is the only county with a Probation Commission.

Commissioner Caster requests to include a request receive agenda and minutes of all Juvenile Justice Council meetings chaired by the Chief Probation Officer.

Commissioner Gardner will incorporate amendments and circulate the document one more time for review and a vote.

## **V. JUVENILE SOLITARY CONFINEMENT RESOLUTION LETTER**

With respect to final draft stage of the Resolution, Commissioner Gardner shared with Chief. Chief did not have objection to Resolution.

Commissioner Meredith expressed support for document, recommends change of word to “support” instead of “direct” and shares that the Chief is expected to act with respect to solitary confinement.

Commissioner Kaplan expresses urgency to act on the Resolution since the Commission has been discussing the Resolution since January.

Commissioner Seaver expressed view that the department is moving in a more progressive.

Commissioner Caster calls the question, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan. Motion passes 11 yes (Butler, Jones, Caster, Kaplan, Shutan, Gardner, Levine, Seaver, Hollopeter) 2 no (Meredith, Mitchell).

Resolution will be signed and sent forward.

## **VI. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS OR PRESENTATIONS**

Commissioner Caster requests two updates: 1) a report on the Ombudsman line transition to the helpline and 2) Implementation of the new nutritional standards & how that is proceeding.

Commissioner Levine requests a list of all outstanding requests dating back to December 9, 2015. I want to request progress reports in 30 days for paragraphs 6, 7, 8.

Item 6 –Commissioner Levine requested to know how many 18 year olds are in each camps that have graduated from high school. What are the services for these youth? If the Department is in the planning stage: what are the plans and timelines for implementation?

Item 7 – Commissioner Seaver requested a full count on how many 18 year olds are in the program.

Item 8 – Commissioner Yamashiro requested to know how many 18 year olds are in camps and halls have earned a diploma and do not have anything to do in the school day.

Commissioner Levin expressed concerned about the young people who have nothing to do every day , especially in halls and concerned also about requests for information that go unanswered.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS OR PRESENTATIONS (cont.)**

Bureau Chief Dominguez suggested that responses have been given and need to be tracked.

Commissioner Levin expressed concern that youth at Nidorf & in the compound need more access to job training. Commissioners shared programs that they had knowledge of. Commissioner Mitchell shared an overview about P3 grant opportunity for cross jurisdictional work with LA City, LAUSD and LA County focusing on education, workforce readiness, P3 is about work-related programs for foster and probation youth.

Commissioner Seaver raised issue re clarifying role and function of the Probation Commission. Discussion around timing and process of this item given the Oversight Commission – working group.

Commissioner Meredith shared that the Oversight Committee –working group is doing an extensive work to review the work being done,

Request to calendar the report back from timeline and plan for availability of improved personal items.

Commissioner Kaplan would like to know what the Department is currently doing to assist families in visiting their children.

Commissioner Seaver would like know what the Department is doing to assist youth in obtaining their documents (Birth Certificates, CA identification, Driver's License, Social Security Cards etc.)

Commissioner Seaver asks if the reimbursement policy has been suspended, changed or amended. (Youth reimbursing for their stay in camp)

### **VII. ANNOUNCEMENTS/ Public Comment**

Natasha Kamashian, A question from the audience regarding funding for work force programs and if there are other funds in probation to be used for that program.

Natasha Kamashian, A question re hygiene personals & timelines.

Carlos Leon – AFSCME Local 695. Desires a recommendation from the BOS to the MTA to add a bus route to each Juvenile Hall since many families are transit dependent. Commissioner Kaplan wonders if appropriate place of action is the Probation Commission.

### **VIII. COMMISSION/ COMMITTEE INSPECTION REPORTS**

Commissioner Hollopeter reports that in conversation with procurement staff he was told that new items have been ordered: underwear is now cloth instead of paper, Polo shirts for girls, and trousers for boys.

With respect to transportation, Commissioner Hollopeter related opportunities for public transportation and challenges in providing transportation for families. He commented on how limited transportation is to the remote camps.

### **IX. FOLLOW UP INSPECTION REPORTS**

Commissioners Hollopeter & Jones visited Challenger. Ms. Hollopeter had a "remarkable visit" & saw "significant changes": two camps can come together in town halls & intermural sports; converting one dormitory into a youth space for activity and workforce skill building. Only one boy was in SHU and was released when they were there. Encourages visits to Challenger.

Commissioner Jones noted cultural changes with staff and students. Encourages greater workforce readiness.

Commissioner Seaver recognizes Bureau Chief Dominguez' leadership has supported changes at Challenger. Bureau Chief Dominguez informs the Commission that they will continue to see changes in Bureau.

### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Gardner reminds Commissioner to send him any work they have done on behalf of the Commission for the monthly summary.

Commissioners are also reminded to visit their camps as assigned as inspections are required.

Commissioner by Commissioners Jones moved to adjourn the meeting. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Meredith the motion was approved and the meeting was adjourned at 11:49 p.m.